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WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY MORNING, APRIL 2, 1878.

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CURRENT CAPITAL TOPICS.

GENERAL HANCOCK'S POLITICAL MISSION TO LOUISIANA.

Colonel Tom Anderson's Pardon Promised by Governor Nicholls—A Political-Military Mission—Hancock's Objections Thereto—Colonel Tonietto's as a Fleet-Winged Mercury—Ellis' Blathers—Another Grand Darling—Public Debt—Bills and Reports.

Tom Anderson's Release.

There is confirmation of the statement that General Hancock's trip to New Orleans about the time of Colonel Tom Anderson's trial and conviction was of a political character; in short, he was sent on a mission to Governor Nicholls by President Hayes, the object of which was to secure a pardon from the Governor in the event that Anderson should be sentenced to the penitentiary and the sentence should be sustained by the State Supreme Court. General Hancock was selected for this trust because of his well-known Democratic tendencies and his equally well-known popularity with the White Leaguers of Louisiana. He objected to being sent or used as a political emissary, and offered as a reason therefor the argument that the army should be kept free from all contact with politics or politicians. There are those who are anxious to ascribe this objection to the General's reputed aspiration to become the Democratic candidate for President, and who add that his participation in proceedings incident to the pardon of Anderson would affect his popularity with the Democracy as much, if not more, than his connection with the execution of Mrs. Surratt, although both acts might be traced to his superiors in military command. However this may be, he went down to New Orleans; was cordially received by the Governor and the leading Democrats of Louisiana. He carefully avoided all public display and declined a public reception which was tendered to him.

The President felt much relieved by the reports sent to him from Hancock through the hands of Colonel Tonietto, of General Sherman's staff. The Colonel was also sent down by President Hayes as a political-military emissary, or, more properly speaking, a politico-military messenger. Besides this, it is reasonable to suppose General Hancock did not travel alone, for he is not in the habit of leaving all of his staff behind when on duty for the Government. Of course the Quartermaster's Department defrayed the expenses of the trip, and thereby added to the gravity of the charge of an invasion of the rights of a State by the military arm of the Government.

The reports mentioned were, as may be surmised, assurances from Governor Nicholls that Anderson should be carefully guarded against all possible danger to his permanent liberty, and conveyed a promise, more or less definite, of his pardon by the Governor, if his release by the State Supreme Court should not be forthcoming.

It is understood that Congressional inquiry will soon be made into this matter. All of the particulars, including President Hayes' letter to General Devens on the same subject, may then be made public.

Life-Saving Service on the Lakes.

Nomination on the great lakes and the number of life-saving stations did not commence for the present year until yesterday. A Government keeper, by the name of S. W. Morgan, at No. 4 station, Tenth District, Lake Michigan, informs the inspector of that station under date of the 23d ultimo, "that a fish-boat, coming across, had capsized when three miles off shore, and the two men occupants of the boat were seen clinging to the bottom. He with his two sons, James and Frank, and his wife, who had been on board, had got into their boat to go to the rescue, the life-boat for the beach being too heavy for them to lift, and navigation not being resumed, there were no men around to assist in that duty. But the sea was too heavy for the fish-boat, and they had to pull back. The boy James went for assistance to launch the life-boat, while the others got ready, and when men came the boy had to leave the life-boat. The life-boat seen clinging to their boat, but the life-boat reached them one was washed away and lost. The other was rescued, though badly chilled from the cold and exposure. The other man could have been saved but for the absence of help to launch the boat."

Attack on Long Island.

The Treasury Department yesterday received information that "at six o'clock on the morning of the 26th ultimo the American ship Spartan of Boston, under command of Captain Isaac M. Conant, from Dublin bound to New York, in a dense fog on the Long Island coast, about one-half a mile east of life-saving station No. 20 (Blue Point). The patrol of that station saw her as soon as she stranded and started immediately for help. At half-past seven a.m. got a line to the vessel, the first shot carrying it between the fore and main masts. The apparatus was raised and in working order by nine o'clock. With the jib up, the boat was hauled in, and chain the crew, twenty-nine in number, were safely brought to the shore. The ship was in ballast and the wind from the southwest." No news has since been received as to whether the vessel was gotten off, but that is very doubtful.

Illicit Work in North Carolina.

The Commissioner of Internal Revenue yesterday received an official summary of the work done in the revenue collection district of North Carolina (the sixth), J. J. Motz, collector. Mr. Motz says "that the force of special deputies allowed that district have been actively employed during the month of February, 1878, in the counties of Ashe, Wilkes, Alleghany, Watauga, Avery, Yadkin, and Madison, and in the town of Tryon. They have seized and destroyed 61,900 gallons of mash or beer, 21 copper stills, 670 gallons of 'sluggings,' 90 empty beer stands, 35 barrels of meal, 93 gallons of whisky, 62 illicit distilleries."

Reynolds Final Defeat.

The Senate Committee which has been investigating the affairs of the Freedmen's Hospital yesterday submitted their report, which fully sustain the reports of the two commissioners appointed by the Secretary of the Interior some time since, and which reports were set aside by the Senate because the committee had no power to make them. The report of the prosecuting witness and other interested parties, the report, like the others, fully vindicates Dr. Palmer, and exposes the character of his assailants.

The committee personally inspected the books and accounts of the institution, modes of purchase, &c., and believe the business of the Government at the hospital is conducted with the greatest honesty and economy. Dr. Palmer maintains a sharp competition among dealers, and purchases at the lowest rates good articles of wholesale dealers.

The bill will be reported within a few days, with the unanimous endorsement of the committee. It appropriates \$60,000 for continuing the improvement of the harbor at Washington and Georgetown. The estimate of the Chief of Engineers called for \$100,000.

Our Foreign Trade.

A comparative statement has been prepared by Mr. Edward Young, chief of the Bureau of Statistics, showing the imports and exports of the United States for the months of February, and for the eight months ending February 28, compared with those for the corresponding period of the past preceding:

During February the exports from the United States were..... \$66,011,226

All the imports..... 32,708,465

Excess of imports..... 33,302,757

Exports..... 51,269,350

Imports..... 35,266,100

Excess of exports..... 16,000,841

For the eight months in 1878..... 162,726,373

Exports..... 169,000,285

Imports..... 27,276,285

Excess of exports..... 136,724,000

During the same period of eight months in 1876 the exports of gold and silver..... 20,173,413

Imports..... 17,000,000

Excess of exports..... 3,173,413

In 1877.....

Exports..... 29,369,191

Imports..... 24,000,000

Excess of imports..... 5,369,179

Total exports and imports in the eight months of 1878..... 191,331,671

1877..... 154,862,502

Increased business..... \$8,348,169

Public Debt Statement.

The recapitulation of the statement of the public debt of the United States for the month of March, 1878, just issued, shows:

Bonds bearing interest in cash..... \$738,629,200.00

Bonds at 5 per cent..... 735,260,000.00

Bonds at 4 1/2 per cent..... 250,000,000.00

Bonds at 4 per cent..... 70,000,000.00

1,721,720,800.00

Debt bearing interest in lawful money..... 14,000,000.00

Debt on which interest has ceased since maturity..... 8,000,781.25

Old debt now in lawed.....

Old demand and legal-fender notes..... 317,911,654.50

Fractional currency..... 16,953,115.42

Coin certificates..... 51,983,400.00

147,938,779.12

Total debt..... 2,191,571,206.38

Total interest..... 22,294,774.42

Total debt, principal and interest..... \$2,214,847,975.83

Date, less cash in the Treasury..... April 1, 1878. 2,023,723,514.31

Balto., March 1, 1878. 2,024,072,128.08

Decrease of debt during month..... 2,318,614.72

Balto. since June 30, 1877..... 220,434,778.93

Secretary Sherman on Resumption.

Secretary Sherman was before the Committee on Banking and Currency yesterday morning, and presented statements in regard to the capacity of the Government to resume specific payments. He proceeded on the assumption that there ought to be legislation authorizing the resumption of the \$300,000,000 of legal tenders, and that all over that amount should be withdrawn. He said that there ought to be \$150,000,000 or \$135,000,000 of coin available on January 1, 1879, to make resumption safe, and asserted that the banks would hold legal tender and coin until they had over one-third of their circulation. The Secretary, in reply to questions by members of the committee, stated that the present volume of legal-tender notes was about \$317,900,000, and that of national bank notes \$316,900,000, and admitted that this was not the exact amount, but that the sum included in the notes of the Bank of the United States, the Comptroller of the Currency, and the national bank notes was probably required. He further stated that the revenues of the Government, both from internal revenue and from external sources, were sufficient to meet the stipulations of the treaty.

"A considerable Greek population, although it views the prospect with alarm, will be merged into a Slav community after its union with Russia. The provisions by which Russia will practically annex Bulgaria will render the Slav administration of Bulgaria difficult, and the Russian army controls the first workings of its industrial system in the Black and Euxine Seas.

"The combined effect of the stipulations upon the interests of the Powers also furnishes a conclusive reason against separate discussion of any portion of them.

"The British government has given to new Bulgaria, a strong Slave state will be created, under the auspices and control of Russia, who will act as a preponderating political and commercial master in the Black Sea.

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